

U.S. Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 11, 2006

The Honorable Christopher S. Bond
Chairman
Transportation, Treasury, the Judiciary,
Housing and Urban Development and
Related Agencies
Appropriations Subcommittee
The Capitol, Room S146A
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Transportation, Treasury, the Judiciary,
Housing and Urban Development and
Related Agencies
Appropriations Subcommittee
128 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Bond and Senator Murray:

We are writing to request your support for the FY 2007 appropriated level of \$227 million for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program. We also ask that you support continued funding for this program within the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), rather than moving the program to the U.S. Department of Justice.

The HIDTA program supports and facilitates coordination among federal, state, and local law enforcement to combat the most pressing drug threat in each region. In many HIDTA regions, that threat is methamphetamine. Since its inception in 1990, the HIDTA program has demonstrated remarkable success and achieved impressive results. Some of the program's accomplishments last year included:

- More than \$10.5 billion worth of illegal drugs and \$500 million in illegally gained drug assets were permanently removed from the illegal drug market.
- Operations of 3,538 drug trafficking organizations and money laundering organizations were either completely dismantled or disrupted to the point where their ability to operate was severely diminished.
- HIDTA initiatives took part in identifying and destroying more than 4,500 clandestine labs capable of producing a minimum of \$31 million worth of methamphetamine per year.
- HIDTA initiatives helped to identify and clean-up more than 2,700 clandestine lab dump sites.

- HIDTA initiatives located and apprehended more than 12,000 fugitives.

The HIDTA program is built on the premise that federal, state, and local agencies should have an equal voice in managing their individual HIDTAs to address regional drug threats. ONDCP provides a neutral environment in which this program may flourish. Similar to last year, the proposal to move the HIDTA program does not specify how the program would be managed by the Department of Justice. Additionally, state and local agencies would be less willing to make significant contributions of personnel and/or resources to HIDTA task forces if they believe they will not have an equal say in their strategic focus.

Once again this year, the Senate-passed Budget Resolution included an amendment to restore funding to HIDTA and ensure HIDTA funding remains in ONDCP because that is where Congress last authorized the program to reside.

The Senate's commitment to restore funding to HIDTA and to maintain the integrity of this program is clear. The proposal to move HIDTA from ONDCP poses a real threat to the substantial progress made in disrupting the market for illegal drugs. At this critical time in our fight against methamphetamine and its devastating effects, we cannot afford to undermine our law enforcement capabilities by making unnecessary changes to an already successful program. We urge you to keep HIDTA at ONDCP and restore funding for the HIDTA program to \$227 million.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Chuck Grassley

Tom U. Coburn

Tom F. Kelly

Max Baucus

Carl Levin

John P. ...

Michael B. Enji

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Kent Lott

Chris Hatch

Babara Byer

Daniel DeLoake

Rebbie Steiner

Byron L. Eason

Frank R. Lautenberg

Chuck Schumer

Phil Martin

Imogene Keister

Herb Kohl

Paul Sarbanes

Kent Conrad

Gregorio

Jay Byrnes

Thur Fiebigel

Don Vetter

Allen Jech

Maria Carlucci

E. Benjamin Johnson

Ken Salzman

Jim Kirk

Tom Fargy

Jim

Tom Kuhl

Alvin

Mary Landrum

Pete Hornum

Bill Nelson

Steve Johnson

Wm DeWine

Tom Hark

Mark Boyer

Dick Durb

Craig Thomas

Paul

for 1/2

Chris Dall

CHS

Jim Talbot

Bull

Jim Jeffers

Gale HAGEC

Em Bayh

Patrick Leahy

Stephen Snow

John Conyn